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FIFTH COMMITTEE
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at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 50th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/46/L.33, A/46/L.34 and A/46/L.35 concerning agenda item 33 (continued)

1. Mr. LEV (Israel) said that his delegation had been absent when the programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/46/L.33, L.34 and L.35, concerning the question of Palestine, had been discussed in the Committee. It wished to reiterate its reservations with regard to the expenditure which would be extended by the draft resolutions, which, in its view was a misuse of United Nations funds and was not conducive to the peace process in the Middle East.

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/46/L.25, A/46/L.31, A/46/L.32, A/46/L.41, A/46/L.42 and A/46/L.43 concerning agenda item 37 (A/C.5/46/63)

2. The CHAIRMAN said that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had asked him to convey to the Committee the Advisory Committee's view that adoption of the draft resolutions on agenda item 37 would not give rise to any additional appropriations for the biennium 1992-1993.

3. Mrs. CLIFF (United Kingdom) said that her delegation would state its views on draft resolution A/46/L.41 at the appropriate plenary meeting of the General Assembly. With respect to the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/46/L.63), it would have welcomed more detailed information on how the activities and workload of the Special Committee against Apartheid were being adjusted in response to changing circumstances. No matter how worthy the objective, adequate justification must be provided for any proposed expenditure.

4. The CHAIRMAN said he would take it that, on the basis of the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee wished to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolutions A/46/L.25, L.31, L.32, L.41, L.42 and L.43, no modification of the relevant subprogrammes under sections 7 and 31 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 would be required, and that no additional appropriation would be required under sections 7, 31 or 32.

5. It was so decided.

Status of technological innovations in the United Nations (continued) (A/46/7/Add.12; A/C.5/46/1 and Corr.1)

Status of telecommunications activities in the United Nations (continued) (A/46/7/Add.12; A/C.5/46/5)

Integrated management information system project (continued) (A/46/7/Add.12; A/C.5/46/24)

Optical disk storage and retrieval system (continued) (A/46/7/Add.12, and A/46/88 and Corr.1; A/C.5/45/58 and A/C.5/46/26)

6. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at two previous meetings, the Committee had discussed the Secretary-General's reports on the status of technological innovations (A/C.5/46/1 and Corr.1), the status of telecommunications activities (A/C.5/46/5), the integrated management information system (IMIS) (A/C.5/46/24) and the optical disk storage and retrieval system (A/C.5/45/58 and A/C.5/46/26), and suggested that the Committee might wish to adopt a decision in which it would take note of those reports; endorses the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee in its report on the projects in question (A/46/7/Add.12); request the Secretary-General to ensure coordination among all organizational units involved, in order to harmonize their activities to prevent future incompatibilities and ensure their efficient and cost-effective use; request the Secretary-General to submit a single comprehensive report on those projects, including information on the steps taken to implement the Advisory Committee's recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, taking into account the views on the projects expressed by delegations in the Fifth Committee; and reiterate its request to the Secretary-General for a cost-benefit analysis of the IMIS project to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session so as to enable the Assembly to review the matter.

7. Mrs. CLIFF (United Kingdom) reminded the Committee that at an earlier meeting her delegation had proposed the termination of the IMIS project. That proposal deserved serious consideration in view of the Secretariat's inability to identify any quantifiable benefit to be derived from so expensive a project. Provision should be made in the budget for the biennium 1992-1993 for the costs of discontinuing the project, as estimated by the Secretariat. At the same time, her delegation recognized that a case could be made for investigating more cost-effective arrangements for improving the availability of management information within the Secretariat, and it would also be prepared to agree to some modest provision for staff to investigate such arrangements and for preparation of a report on the subject to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. She suggested that her delegation's proposal should be discussed informally in the context of section 33 A of the proposed programme budget.

8. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom that there was a need for serious discussion of the IMIS project, and suggested that a final decision on the matter should be deferred to allow time for informal consultations.

9. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) suggested that the Committee might take a decision on the three other projects, while deferring action on the IMIS project.

10. Mr. LINDFORS (Sweden) said that the decision suggested by the Chairman constituted a good compromise solution. However, his delegation would also be prepared to take part in the proposed informal consultations.

11. Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium) supported the United Kingdom proposal to discuss the IMIS project in the context of informal consultations on section 33 of the proposed programme budget, since the issue was very closely linked to the budget estimates.

12. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adopt the decision he had outlined earlier in the meeting, omitting any reference to IMIS.

13. It was so decided.

14. The CHAIRMAN asked the representative of Sweden to coordinate the informal consultations on the IMIS project.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.